

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1-10 were originally pending in the application. Claim 1 is amended and claims 11 and 12 are newly added. Support for newly added claims 11 and 12 can be found in the application at, for example, page 2 (amended sheet), lines 13, 24 and 25. Therefore, claims 1-12 are now pending in the present application.

Claims 1 and 3-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Stein et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,806,427). Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Stein as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Goodman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,033,458). It is respectfully submitted that the pending claims, as amended, are patentable over the art of record for the reasons set forth below.

Applicants' invention, as recited by amended claim 1, includes a feature which is neither disclosed nor suggested by the art of record, namely:

treating a surface ... with a polyelectrolyte to yield a surface coating of the polyelectrolyte thereon, and subsequently treating the surface with an aqueous slurry comprising metal oxide particles. (emphasis added)

This means that, according to the claimed invention, when metal oxide coatings are deposited onto a metal or ceramic substrate, the polyelectrolyte surface coating had already been applied before treating the surface with an aqueous slurry of metal oxide particles. Claim 1 has been amended to remove the words "or simultaneously," indicating that treating the surface of the substrate with a polyelectrolyte occurs before, not at the same time as, the treating of the surface of the substrate with an aqueous slurry comprising metal oxide particles. This feature was part of previously amended claim 1. No new matter has been added.

This new feature is neither disclosed nor suggested in Stein et al. Stein et al. discloses an aqueous slurry comprising metal oxide particles and a polyelectrolyte. However, Stein et al. differs from the current invention in that Stein et al. does not disclose or suggest a process for treating the surface of a substrate with a polyelectrolyte and then subsequently treating the substrate with an aqueous slurry of metal oxide particles. There is no motivation for one skilled in the art to adapt the coating method disclosed in Stein et al. by providing a process with at least two steps wherein a substrate is coated with a polyelectrolyte and subsequently coated with an aqueous slurry of metal oxide particles.

Claims 2-10 and newly added claims 11 and 12 include all of the features of independent claim 1, from which they depend, either directly or indirectly. The rejection of claim 2 based on Stein et al. and Goodman et al. has been rendered moot in view of the amendments to claim 1. Thus, claims 2-10 and newly added claims 11 and 12 are patentable over the art of record for the reasons set forth above.

In view of the amendments and arguments set forth above, applicants submit that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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